

Message Text

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SUBJECT: VISIT OF UNDER SECRETARY OF COMMERCE JOHN K.

TABOR, MARCH 16-19

1. SUMMARY: UNDER SECRETARY TABOR'S VISIT TO TAIPEI WAS HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL AND PROVIDED VERY AUSPICIOUS START FOR THE US TRADE CENTER. HIS TWO MAJOR PUBLIC APPEARANCES, TO ADDRESS APCAC SESSION AND TO ASSIST IN DEDICATION OF TRADE CENTER, RECEIVED MAXIMUM FAVORABLE MEDIA COVERAGE. DURING UNDER SECRETARY'S CALLS ROC OFFICIALS, INCLUDING PREMIER, EXPRESSED SOME CONCERN ABOUT IMPACT OF SLUGGISH USM MARKET ON ROC EXPORT PERFORMANCE IN 1974. THEY ALSO EMPHASIZED TAIWAN'S CRITICAL DEPENDENCE ON COMMODITY IMPORTS FROM US, ESPECIALLY FERROUS SCRAP, AND WERE QUITE POINTED ABOUT IMPORTANCE OF EXIM FINANCING TO HELP REDUCE US/ROC TRADE GAP. UNDER SECRETARY ADOPTED CAUTIOUS UPBEAT NOTE IN DISCUSSING US ECONOMIC PROSPECTS. HE MADE NO PROMISES BUT TOOK SYMPATHETIC NOTE OF VARIOUS ROC CONCERNS. END SUMMARY.

2. HIGHLIGHTS OF UNDER SECRETARY'S VISIT WERE AS FOLLOWS:

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A. APCAC ADDRESS-ON MARCH 17 UNDER SECRETARY SPOKE

AT LUNCHEON MEETING ATTENDED BY APPROXIMATELY 300 PERSONS, INCLUDING DELEGATES TO CONVENTION OF ASIAN-PACIFIC COUNCIL OF AMERICAN CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE (APCAC) MEMBERS TAIPEI AMCHAM AND NUMBER OF TOP ROC OFFICIALS. HIS ADDRESS WAS WELL-RECEIVED AND WAS WIDELY REPORTED IN LOCAL PRESS.

B. DEDICATION OF US TRADE CENTER-DEDICATION CEREMONIES WERE GRACED BY PRESENCE OF PREMIER CHIANG CHING-KUO, WHO GAVE SHORT ADDRESS AS DID UNDER SECRETARY AND AMBASSADOR MCCONAUGHY. AFTER UNDER SECRETARY AND ECONOMIC MINISTER SUN CUT RIBBON FOUR PRINCIPALS TOURED EXHIBITS OF US PRODUCTS PRESENTED BY LOCAL MANUFACTURERS, DISTRIBUTORS AND AGENTS. APPROXIMATELY 100 INVITED GUESTS ATTENDED THE DEDICATION. THEY INCLUDED TOP ROC OFFICIALS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF US AND ROC BUSINESS COMMUNITIES. FOLLOWING DEPARTURE OF PREMIER, UNDER SECRETARY HELD PRESS CONFERENCE IN TRADE CENTER CONFERENCE ROOM WITH APPROXIMATELY 35 REPORTERS FROM LOCAL PAPERS AND WIRE SERVICES.

C. CALLS ON ROC OFFICIALS-UNDER SECRETARY MET WITH PREMIER, MINISTER SUN, MINISTER OF FINANCE K.T. LI AND GOVERNOR OF CENTRAL BANK YU KUO-HUA ON WIDE RANGE OF US-ROC TRADE RELATIONSHIPS. ROC OFFICIALS EXPRESSED HOPE THAT US ECONOMY WOULD PERFORM SUFFICIENTLY WELL IN 1974 TO ABSORB EXPANDING AMOUNTS OF ROC EXPORTS ON WHICH TAIWAN'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPENDS. THEY ALSO STRESSED ROC'S NEED FOR AGRICULTURAL AND OTHER COMMODITIES, ESPECIALLY FERROUS SCRAP, AND CRUCIAL IMPORTANCE OF CONTINUING EXIM BANK FUNDING IF ROC IS TO HAVE ANY SUCCESS IN CLOSING TRADE GAP WITH US. UNDER SECRETARY DISPLAYED CONFIDENCE ABOUT IMPROVING US ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE IN LAST QUARTERS OF 1974. WHILE DEFERRING TO SECRETARY BUTZ FOR AUTHORITATIVE COMMENTS, HE SAID THAT AVAILABILITY OF US AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS LOOKED REASONABLY GOOD FOR 1974, AND HE PROMISED TO REVIEW ROC'S FERROUS SCRAP QUOTA WITHOUT COMMITMENT TO ANY CHANGE. AS FOR EXIM FINANCING, UNDER SECRETARY URGED ROC TO ESTABLISH CLEAR PRIORITIES TO MAKE BEST USE OF BANK'S AVAILABLE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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RESOURCES. DETAILS REPORTED IN SEPARATE TELEGRAMS.

D. SOCIAL ACTIVITIES -UNDER SECRETARY HOSTED DINNER FOR GOVERNOR YU, MINISTERS LI AND SUN AND OTHER PROMINENT ROC OFFICIALS ON MARCH 17. AMBASSADOR MCCONAUGHY GAVE LUNCHEON IN UNDER SECRETARY'S HONOR MARCH 18 WHICH BROUGHT TOGETHER NUMBER OF LEADING ROC BUSINESSMEN FROM PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS. UNDEE

SECRETARY AND AMBASSADOR CO-HOSTED RECEPTION AT TRADE CENTER EVENING OF MARCH 18 FOR ABOUT 250 OFFICIALS, MEMBERS OF US AND ROC BUSINESS COMMUNITIES, EDITORS AND PUBLISHEERS OF MAJOR TAIAN NEWSPAPERS AND MEMBERS OF DIPLOMATIC CORPS. THIS WAS FOLLOWED BY DINNER HOSTED BY MINISTER SUN FOR UNDER SECRETARY AND MEMBERS HIS ENTOURAGE AND EMBASSY AND MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS OFFICIALS.

E. MEDIA COVERAGE-UNDER SECRETARY'S VISIT RECEIVED WIDE PRESS AND TELEVISION COVERAGE, BEGINNING WITH HIS ARRIVAL STATEMENT MARCH 16 AND ENDING WITH HIS DEPARTURE STATEMENT MARCH 19. HIS APCAC ADDRESS, PRESS CONFERENCE AND REMARKS AT TRADE CENTER DEDICATION WERE REPORTED IN DETAIL.

3. COMMENT: UNDER SECRETARY TABOR, WHO WAS THE HIGHEST RANKING USG OFFICIAL TO VISIT TAIWAN SINCE SECRETARY DENT IN JULY 1973, WAS ACCORDED A WARM AND CORDIAL WELCOME BY GRC AS WELL AS US AND ROC BUSINESSMEN. HIS APCAC ADDRESS WAS EASILY THE HIGHLIGHT OF THE CONVENTION AND THE LOCAL AMCHAM IS MOST APPRECIATIVE THAT HE WAS ABLE TO BE PRESENT. WHILE THE VISIT WAS BUILT AROUND HIS APPEARANCE AT APCAC AND THE DEDICATION OF THE TRADE CENTER, GRC OFFICIALS HAVE EMPHASIZED TO US THAT THEY WERE HIGHLY PLEASED THAT HE ENGAGED IN SUCH A FRANK AND SYMPATHETIC DISUCSSION OF THE WHOLE GAMUT OF US-ROC BILATERAL TRADE PROBLEMS.
MCCONAUGHY

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